

ERIE-NIAGARA REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

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MEMORANDUM

To: Co-Chairs Clyde Burmaster & Barry Weinstein, MD

From: Economic Development Chair Hector Titus

Re: April & May, 2006 Meetings

Date: June 2, 2006

The Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership Economic Development Subcommittee met April 7, 2006 at the Erie County Industrial Development Agency, and May 19 at the Niagara County Center for Economic Development. Present for the April meeting were subcommittee members Titus, Doolittle, Konst, St. Pierre (proxy), Weinstein, and Witul. Present for the May meeting were subcommittee members Titus, Konst, Roll, Weinstein, and Witul.

Small Business Assistance Website:

We continue to seek funding for this project. In an effort to gain exposure for our efforts, we contacted Business First and an article about the project was included in their April 14-20 edition. Subcommittee Member Doolittle is following a lead, and we still have not yet heard from the New York State Assembly members from whom we requested funds (Subcommittee Member Konst will contact Assemblymember Schimminger to follow up). Utility companies were also suggested as possible leads.

Small Business 311:

Per a recommendation from the subcommittee, ENRP member Timothy Wanamaker made a presentation on the small business 311 concept at the March 31, 2006 general meeting. The issue was then referred back to committee for further discussion. The subcommittee affirmed that the idea of implementing this on a regional scale was worth further discussion, but that first the City of Buffalo's 311 system should be implemented and reviewed to better inform any such discussion.

Niagara Falls International Airport (NFIA):

While efforts continue to develop the NFIA, the subcommittee agreed that the stalled casino money is an impediment to this project as well as the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation. Further, it was proposed that the Seneca Niagara Casino Corporation be approached to invest in the NFIA as a means of furthering their business interests as well, as it was noted that the Seneca Nation is looking for "legacy projects" and that they have in the past expressed an interest in sponsoring charter flights.

The Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership Economic Development Subcommittee recommends that ENRP issue a letter urging New York State to immediately release the casino funding for the Niagara Falls International Airport and the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation; and that ENRP also issue a letter to the Seneca Niagara Casino Corporation asking them to consider investing in the NFIA.

Electronic Permitting:

Weinstein updated the group that Erie County has been able to implement e-permitting for over a year, but that the county's Division of Information and Support Services (DISS) is reluctant to do so due to costs and staffing issues. The county gave the okay for the University at Buffalo Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth – who were contracted to develop the pilot – to market the system to municipalities, which would have to pay to be included.

The subcommittee believes that this project continues to be important and that we should reiterate our offer to the Giambra administration to assist in its implementation. **The Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership Economic Development Subcommittee recommends that ENRP issue a letter to the Giambra administration offering to assist determining ways to implement electronic permitting.**

Framework for Regional Growth:

The Framework's steering committee met on May 2 and it was agreed that the last week in June would be a target time to hold public meetings on the draft document. It was again noted that the Framework and the Regional Economic Development Strategy would need to be integrated, and that the two counties' Legislatures will need to be properly educated on the Framework.

MBE/WBE Procurement Programs:

A presentation on uniform certification for minority business procurement will be given at the June 2, 2006 general meeting. Following that presentation, the subcommittee will discuss what actions ENRP should take on this matter. It was also noted that a second presentation on the topic may be needed at the September general meeting.

Other Topics:

New ENRP Member David Roll informed the subcommittee of a major economic development event scheduled for June, 2007. He will announce the event to the full group at the June 2 general meeting.